

2022

God's Empire
OVER THE
WIND,

Consider'd in a
SERMON
ON THE
FAST-DAY,

January 19, 170 $\frac{3}{4}$.

By THOMAS BRADBURY.

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THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.

THIS Sermon was designed for no other Sense than the Ear, and no further a spread than among a single Congregation; and therefore it's easie to observe, with how little Guard either of Accuracy or Language it comes out. As my own hurry in making it ready for the Press, allow'd me only Time to transcribe it, so indeed I durst not be at any New Pains to prepare it for the Publick Taste; lest it should appear more like a Gaudy Jest; than a Memorial; or an Improvement of the late Storm. I'm sure, The Tempest, which occasion'd this Discourse,

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The Epistle

course, blew no softness of Rhetorick, but a plain Indignation. That long Roar of Wind (Nov. 25, 26, and 27, 1703.) which tumbled down Houses upon their Inhabitants, and lodged the Ships, with their unhappy Contents, in the Gaping Ocean, this is too Solemn for an Airy Flaunt of Words.

It was therefore my chief Study (as Providence is only the Bible repeated in Action) to give a Scriptural Account of God's Sovereignty, and of our Carriage under such a Discovery of it: I have found, in my little Experience, that Inspired Words have sunk with the most Penetration and Empire with the Hearts of Men: When God speaks Judgments, He refers us to the lively Oracles: The Doctrines, Threatnings and Promises there, are level into all His Dispensations in the World; they tell us as much of His Majesty, as we can ever See in Providence: The Later is but a Vindication of the Former; it's God's Reply to the Challenge of Unbelief and Presumption; He then lets Mankind feel that He

to the Reader.

He will be steady to His Word. That we may take both these together, has been my Endeavour in the following Discourse.

It was some Ground of Encouragement on the Fast-Day to find most Congregations, in this City and the Adjacent Parts, not only crouded, but with such Persons as declar'd a good Sense of their Business there. And perhaps one thing that both fill'd and regulated our Assemblies, was, that other Storm that we were apprehensive of, in the Moment of Worship. God seem'd to be repeating the former Quarrel, tho' not in the same Degree of Loudness; and Extent of Ruin; as if He would catch our departing seriousness back again, and restore something of that Awe, that we felt in the Great Tempest.

But it's equally certain and deplorable, that these Impressions soon wore off. The People, that could not but tremble at the sound of this Judgment, have prophanely mockt it since. It's dismal to think, that so sweeping a Calamity

The Epistle

Calamity as this, should ever become the Entertainment of the Stage. That Men should act the Mimick so far, as to make Ruin a Diversion, by dressing it up with Atheism and Foppery. The Banter of this Ungodliness is so extreme, that the Right Reverend the Lord BISHOP of OXFORD, tho't fit to arraign it that Day in a Sermon before the House of Peers: There's a Vein of sweet and serious Eloquence runs thro' the whole Discourse, but upon this Subject, His Lordship discovers so much of a Christian warmth, that I shall Transcribe the Passage, and cover my own Insignificant Regret with this Venerable Authority. " To

show how far we have
Page 17. *" exceeded the Impieties*

" of the Jews, permit
" me to mention one Instance, tho'
" I cannot do it without Horror,
" of a late daring Affront to God,
" unparallel'd by the Jewish or any
" civilized Nation, which looks like
" a defying, if not a ridiculing, of
" His Judgments; I mean that im-
" pudent Representation of a Mock-
" Tempest

to the Reader.

“ Tempest on the Stage, so soon
“ after we had felt that dreadful
“ One, that gives occasion to our
“ Meeting this Day. I think I should
“ not have been just to my Subject,
“ if I had omitted to take Notice
“ of this unpresidented Piece of Pro-
“ phaneness; and certainly 'twill be
“ no Digression from it, to add,
“ That whilst these Nurseries of
“ Lewdness are suffer'd to corrupt
“ the Age, 'tis in vain to hope to
“ see it Reform'd.

If there were more of this Noble Spirit among those whom Providence has rais'd above the common Level, it would either make such as profess one Lord, drop their little Varieties, or continue them without any Violation of Harmony and Peace. I will only add, that if this Zeal was kindled where it's now Wanting, enlarg'd where it has begun to live, and successful in every Attempt and Flame that it breaks out in, it would be an hopeful Security to the Nation's present Happiness, and

The Epistle, &c.

*and a good Sign, that Glory shall
yet dwell in our Land.*

*That the various Sermons which
are Printed upon this Occasion, may
stir up a Courage against the Wicked-
ness that makes God our Enemy, is
the Hearty Desire of*

Wapping,
Feb. 21. 170 $\frac{3}{4}$.

T. Bradbury.

A
SERMON.

Preach'd On the
FAST-DAY,
January the 19th, 170³/₄.

Prov. xxx. iv.

— *Who hath gathered the Wind
in his Fists ?* —

The whole Verse is Thus ;

*Who hath ascended up into Heaven, or
descended ? Who hath gathered the
Wind in his Fists ? Who hath bound
the Waters in a Garment ? Who hath
established all the ends of the Earth ?
What is his Name, and what is his
Son's Name, if thou canst tell ?*

THIS Chapter is a Collection
of Instructive Sentences, At-
tributed to Agur the Son of
B Jachin,

Jakeh, ver. 1. and they are added to *Solomon's Proverbs*, as being much of the same Cortexture with 'em. Tho' we have no further Account of this Person in Scripture, yet there is sufficient Ground to Believe, that he was a Man of peculiar Reputation for Wisdom; One, that stood highly Advanc'd in the Esteem of the World: And its also very Natural to Suppose, that *Ithiel* and *Ucal* were either his Scholars, or his Intimates, that expected great Advantages by his Converse: They apply themselves to him as a *walking Oracle*; so, that we may, without any Strain, Imagine, that this Chapter is an Answer to their Importunity.

He begins his Discourse with Words, that express both a Decent *Modesty*, and an Awful *Surprize*. He at once confesseth his own narrowness of Tho't, and also Adores, that Myste-rious Head of Knowledge, which he enter'd upon.

He tells 'em, that, as for himself, they had over-rated him; his Accomplishments were no way parallel to
their

over the Winds, &c. 3

their Expectations. Instead of having any peculiar Degree of Wisdom, he will not take with a Common Share. *Surely I am more Brutish than any Man, and have not the understanding of a Man. I neither learned Wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of the Holy,* ver. 2. 3. And indeed, thus it usually is, such as have Treasur'd up any Intellectual Riches, know the Scantiness of their own Attainments; whilst, on the other Hand, Persons, who are Strangers to any solid Learning, do oftentimes make the greatest Pretence and Flourish. Where the Waters are deep, they generally run Smooth and Silent, but when they are Shallow, they proclaim themselves with a Rumbling Noise. This Good Man Sunk lower under all his Discoveries: He found himself Ignorant of much more than he could pretend to an Acquaintance with; So, that as he fills with Light, he has a more Humbling View of his own Darkness. This is the Front of his Discourse; He blames that Excess of Character, which his Friends had given him.

But afterwards he throws a slight upon *all the Humane Race*. Persons, of the greatest Figure in Learning, who have the richest hoards of Experience, and the best Penetration of Mind, lose themselves in their Contemplations of G O D. They are but blundering in the Dark, when they pretend to study his Infinite Nature, and surprizing Works.

Who has ascended up into Heaven, and who has descended? This intimates, that it's impossible there should be any full Knowledge of these things, but what is first learn'd above, and then declar'd upon Earth by a Messenger from that World of Light. This Character, that he speaks of, agrees only with *Jesus Christ* the Great Prophet of the Church: *John the Baptist* gathers up this glorious Title for a Mediator, *No Man hath seen God at any time; The only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him; John 1. 18.* And afterwards in another Place, *He that cometh from above is above all: He that is of the Earth, is earthly, and speaketh*

speaketh of the Earth: He that cometh from Heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth: He whom God hath sent speaketh the Words of God; John 3. 31, 32, 34.

After this he mentions some things, which must be ascrib'd to no other than God, and which none can have a comprehensive Knowledge of. *Who has gather'd the Winds in his Fists? Who has bound the Waters? &c.* The meaning of this Question may be Twofold.

1. Who but God has done these Things? Who can lay a plausible Claim to such Divine Performances? To this purpose agree the Psalmist's Words, *Among the Gods, O Lord, there is none like unto thee; neither are there any works like thy Works: For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: Thou art God alone, Psalm 86. 8, 10.* Or,

2. Who can thoroughly understand this. He do's not only speak of it as a *Truth*, but a *Mystery*. It claims Faith, and it's above Comprehension.

The last Words seem to express a *Messiah's* Interest in these Things; *What is his Name, and what is his Son's Name?* He was concern'd in rearing the Fabrick of this World: *Without him was not any thing made, that was made,* John 1. 3. He has also a share in propping the great Bulk of the Creation. *By him all things consist,* Col. 1. 17. He challengeth this Glory to himself, as a Party in the vast Performance. *When he (that is the Father) prepar'd the Heavens I was there, when he set a Compass upon the Face of the Depth; when he establish'd the Clouds above, when he strengthened the Fountains of the Deep: When he gave to the Sea his Decree, that the Waters should not pass his Commandment; when he appointed the Foundations of the Earth: Then was I by him,* Prov. 8. 27,—30.

And as to the *Winds*, we know, they were made Subject to him in his lowest Abasement. When he appear'd only *in the Form of a Servant*, he shew'd himself the Lord of Nature. This way he surpriz'd his
Com-

Company. At his Command the Wind ceased, and they were sore amaz'd in themselves beyond measure, and wondred, Mark 6. 51. Another Evangelist gives us an higher Account of this Impression, and tells us, what they observ'd convinc'd them of his Deity. *They worshipp'd him, saying, of a Truth thou art the Son of God,* Matt. 14. 33. We read also of another Instance of his Authority over the Winds, that out of the Mouth of two witnessing Miracles, the thing might be establish'd. We may first observe their Distress; *There arose a great Storm of Wind, and the Waves beat into the Ship,* Mark 4. 37. After this we are told of their wondrous Deliverance. *He arose, and rebuked the Wind, and said unto the Sea Peace, be still: And the Wind ceased, and there was a great Calm,* Ver. 39. And the History is concluded with the Remark they pass upon this Performance. *They feared exceedingly, and said one to another, what Manner of Man is this, that even the Wind and the Sea obey him,* Ver. 41.

These other Works are ascrib'd to him. *He has bound the Waters in a Garment*: The Clouds are those vast extended Sheets, which he has wrapt them up in. *He has establisht the Ends of the Earth.* This World is fixt by his Authority, and tho' it's *hung upon nothing*, Job 26. 7. yet he maintains it with his own Arm.

But I shall confine my Tho'ts to that Clause which I first read to you, which you may take the Summ of, in this PROPOSITION.

The whole Stock of Wind is in God's Hand.

Here I shall briefly shew you.

I. What we are to understand by this Phrase.

II. What Use we are to make of this Truth.

1. *The Wind's being gathered into his Fist*, shows us *his Power over it*. That it's no more than the Instrument of his Sovereign Pleasure. He gives it
it

it all it's Breath, and disposeth of it to the Service of his Will. It's the Vassal of his Authority : This is Three Times asserted in the same Words, *When he utters his Voice, there is a Multitude of Waters in the Heavens, and he causeth the Vapours to ascend from the Ends of the Earth, he maketh Lightnings with Rain, and bringeth forth the Wind out of his Treasuries*, Psalm 135. 7. Jer. 10. 13. and 51. 16.

Though Satan is sometimes call'd *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. 2. 2. We are not to suppose, that he has got the Supremacy of the Wind. Whatever leave he may have, upon some Occasions, to affright and disturb this lower World, yet the Government is in a greater Hand. *For lo, he that formeth the Mountains, and createth the Wind, and declareth unto Man what is his Thought, that maketh the Morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high Places of the Earth, the Lord, the God of Hosts is his Name*, Amos 4. 13. We scarce read that ever the Devil had a larger
Scope

Scope to his Malice, than against *Job's* Family: He begins his Mischief with an Army of the *Sabeans*, *Job* 1. 15. After this he burns up the Servants and Cattle with *Lightning*, ver. 16. Then he plies the Remainder with *three Bands of the Caldeans*, ver. 17. And his last Havock is of the Children by a *Wind from the Wilderness*, ver. 19. which Shatter'd the House, and Destroy'd the Persons: But all this was owing to a Commission from above; *The Lord said unto Satan, behold, all that he has is in thy Power, only upon himself put not forth thine Hand*, ver. 12.

It's God, that Rules the whole Armory of Nature: Whatever can be Dreadful lies under his Management; He has not quitted his own Right of Disposal. The Creation received a Being from him, and must pay a Compleat Deference to his Will. 'Tis He that troubles the Air, and spreads an universal Faintness thro' the World. The Seamen see *the work of the Lord, and his Wonders in the deep: For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy Wind, which lifteth up the Waves thereof*, *Psal.* 107. 24. 25. 2. The

2. The Winds being gather'd into his Fist, Intimates, that this Power belongs to him alone. No Creature hath a Breath of Wind to Dispose of, its all Collected into the Divine Hand. This God takes to himself as his own Prerogative. He has his way in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm, and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet. Nah. 1. 3. And it's a way that the Vultur's Eye sees not. None can Trace his Foot-steps, or pretend to Imitate him. Sometimes the Almighty Pleads against Idolaters from the Ordinary Courses of Nature, that lie under his Rule. The Prophets Challenge, Banter, and Reproach the Heathen Gods. Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles, that can cause rain? Art not thou he, O Lord our God? Jer. 14. 22.

When He is Displeas'd, Nature Groans under the Weight of a single Frown. There's an Universal Distress, that the Creation feels: This He Threatens, I will shake the Heavens, and the Earth shall remove out of her place in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger, Isa.

13. 13. This is all His own Appointment: Whatever Calamity befalls us, it's in Obedience to his Supreme Order; *Snow, and Vapour, and Stormy Wind fulfil his Word.*

Mankind are very apt to Swell, when they imagine themselves Possess of any Singular Capacities; but they are sometimes put to the Blush by considering their Inability to perform the least Acts of Providence; They *cannot make one hair white or black; or by taking thought, add one cubit unto their Statures.* Much less are they Capable of turning the great Wheels of Government.

Good *Jehosaphat* enter'd into a League with the King of *Israel*; and, to make this Alliance more Statelily and Pompous, they build a Fleet: This was to strike an Awe upon the Adjacent Countries; But they could neither fix their Endeavours under a Blessing, nor Guard them against a Curse. A Judgment from God Blunders all their Schemes and Imaginations. Thus the Prophet told the King, *Because thou hast joined thy self with Abaziah,*
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the Lord hath broken thy works; and the Ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish. 2 Chron. 20. 37.

What great Havock has He made of Kingdoms and Rulers? He has taken those into His own Hand, who lov'd to be the General Plagues of Mankind. All their Terror, and Preparations for War, are no Resistance to His Sovereignty. Crowns and Scepters are tost like the Ball of Providence: The Nations and Princes, that once show'd the fullest upon Earth, are sunk with an hasty Ruin: He takes away *the man that made the Earth to tremble, and shook Kingdoms, Isa. 14. 16.* And the Country, where he Rul'd, and gather'd up Materials for Tyranny, is *swept with the Besom of Destruction. v. 23.*

3. *The Wind is gather'd into God's Hand,* that it may have a secure Abode there. *In measure when he shooteth it forth, he debates with it; and stays his rough Wind in the day of his east-wind, Isa. 27. 8.* If any other had the Disposal of it, there would be a continual Havock of Nature: He alone can Check its Violence: It will allow
of

of no Bridle but his Command ; It's above all other Controul. *The Four Angels* were his Servants, who *stood on the four corners of the Earth, holding the Wind, that it should not blow on the Earth, nor the Sea, nor any Tree.* Rev. 7.1.

And its well for us, that the Sway of this Judgment is in God. I have let you see, under a Former Head, what Dreadful Ravage Satan makes, if he has but a Commission to indulge his Malice ; He would show no more Pity to the World, than he did to *Job's* Family. Should Enemies have the disposal of Storms and National Miseries, what sad Confusions would they bring upon the Earth ? But here's our Comfort, this is Heaven's own Artillery : These are Judgments wherein Mankind have no Interest ; They are not so much as the Tools of God's Supremacy in this Case.

4. *The Wind is*, said to be, *gather'd into his Fist*, To shew us how easily He can *let it out* : It's but opening His Hand, and the Tempest flies upon it's Master's Errand : His Commission is fulfill'd with all the Dispatch

patch and Integrity of Nature. He scatters his bright Cloud, and it is turned round about by his Counsels, that he may do whatsoever he commandeth upon the face of the World in the Earth. He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy, Job 37. 11. 12, 13. Whatever the Design be, it's easily Accomplish'd: He is always in Readiness to deal with an Obstinate World; He hath a Stock of Terrors at Command. And if the Sons of Men will go on to harden themselves, they shall feel the Mistake of all their vain Thoughts. He can with as much ease Destroy us, as Terrifie us; it calls for no more Expence and Fatigue of Power: We are as soon Crush'd as Reprov'd. It's the same thing, with God, to let out all His Wrath at once, as to give us a weaker Taste of it: He has greater Reserves than Sinners are willing to imagine; He does not put his whole Strength into one Blast of Wind; but can raise a more Expeditious Tempest, and let us feel the Terror of those Words, *In my Jealousie, and in the fire of my Wrath*

Wrath have I spoken; surely there shall be a great shaking in the Land of Israel: So, that the Fishes of the Sea, and the Fowls of the Heaven, and all creeping things that creep upon the Earth, and all the Men that are upon the face of the Earth, shall shake at my Presence; and the Mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every Wall shall fall to the Ground. Eze. 38. 19. 20.

The Reason why a Provoking Wretch, or a Sinful Nation are spar'd, is not because Justice is unfurnish'd for Execution; but God is willing to make his power known, and therefore endures with much Long-suffering, the vessels of Wrath fitted to Destruction, Rom. 9. 22. He will Glorifie his Patience in forbearing them a while, and then they shall be visited with Thunder, and Earthquake, and great Noise, with Storm, and Tempest, and the flame of devouring Fire, Isa. 29. 6. How easie a matter is it for Him to blow an Hurricane in a Moment? He can at once put Nature into a Ruffle.

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The *Affyrians* spread a Formidable Siege before *Jernusalem*; There was number enough to swallow their own way to Victory; But you see what short Work God makes with 'em. It's little more than an Hours Toil to sweep them out of this Life, and make them only an Army of Carcases; That night the Angel of the Lord went out, and smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand, and in the morning they were all dead Corps, 2 King. 19. 35. And the same may He do with His Wind: He has a Tempest within Call, which He may, at any Time, unloose upon a Stubborn People: Thus He Inform'd *Job* of His Power, when He answer'd him out of the Whirlwind, Job 38. 1. Hast thou entred into the treasures of the Snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the Hail? Which I have reserv'd against the time of trouble, against the day of Battel and War? ver. 22. 23.

Thus I have consider'd the import of this Phrase; but I principally Design the Application.

And this I shall do Three ways:

I. Shew what General Use we are to make of this Truth.

II. How the Consideration of God's Rule over the Winds should Influence us, when we are Humbling our selves before him.

III. What Comforts true Believers may gather from such a Text, and Providence as this.

[1.] For the general Improvement, we may take these Four Heads of Advice: *If the Wind is in God's Hand.*

I. Let us Learn to *Adore His Power*, which is Wonderfully express'd this way: Bow before Him; *Serve Him acceptably with Reverence and Godly Fear*, Heb. 12. 28. He will be Acknowledg'd in all His peculiar Steps of Government: He's adorning His own Name, fixing a greater Reputation upon it in a time of Publick Judgment; *He causeth His glorious Voice to be heard*, and shews *the lightning down of His Arm*.

Arm, with the indignation of His Anger, with Scattering and Tempest, and Hail-stones, Isa. 30. 30. This Use does Agur make of it: He's fill'd with a Religious dread of that Majesty, which inscribes it self upon these Providences.

This is the End why God Declares an unusual Greatness to the whole Race of Mankind at once, that they may cease to abuse His Glory by their vain Thoughts of Him, and the open Contempt of their Practice. If we refuse to Tremble before Him; If we study more Impenitency, He may load us with a Terror, that has no Mercy at all in it. When Sinners Scorn to Humble themselves, His Indignation shall do it for them: One Brush of His Arm shall separate them from the Vanities, that they trust in. *The day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low; — And upon all the Ships of Tarshish; — And they shall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the caves of the Earth, for fear of the*
C 2 Lord,

Lord, and for the Glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the Earth, Isa. 2. 12. 16, 19. Therefore it highly Concerns us to break the approaching Storm, by seeking the Lord whilst he may be found, and calling upon him whilst he is near, Isa. 55. 6.

If we do not this way improve the Stroke, it's lost upon us, and we may Fear there's worse in Reserve. We have all of us found, that there is a Power Superior to our own, that the Wind is under an higher Management than we can give it: And what is this for? Why should God step out of His Way, but to bring us into ours? Let us henceforth preserve a dutiful Veneration for Him upon our Spirits. *I know, says the Psalmist, that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods; He bringeth the Wind out of His Treasures, Psal. 135. 5, 7. We see he is Terrible, when he does but fight us with outward Afflictions, how Dreadful then is that Wrath, which is pointed at the Conscience? These are no more than part of his Ways, it's but a little portion that we know of him?*

Him? The Thunder of His Power who can understand? Job 26. 14.

2. We may Learn to *rest satisfied in His Will*, knowing, that if the Wind be under His Command, it's wisely Dispos'd of. The Scripture Represents Him as considering the Case of a Nation, and measuring the judgments, that He sends against 'em. *He looketh to the ends of the Earth, and seeth under the whole Heaven, to make a weight for the Winds, he weigheth the Waters by measure; When he made a decree for the Rain, and a way for the Lightning and the Thunder, then did he see and declare it, he prepared it, yea searched it out, Job 28. 24.—27.* I am not only pressing you to Silence under this Dispensation, because we cannot help it; but as it's *the work of Him, who is Excellent in Counsel, Isa. 28. 29.* He never took a False or Imprudent Step in the Kingdom of Providence. Tho' things have but a Cloudy Face at Present, and perhaps there's not much appearance of Wisdom in 'em, yet we may conclude, that God Orders them all aright.

We Read of *Darkness* being *under His Feet*, Psal. 18. 9. The Work it self, that He goes about, and all His Advances in it are hid from the Sons of Men: There's a Cloud between our Eyes and Him; but still Wisdom has the Sovereignty in all these Affairs. Tho' His Power admits of no Control in the ordinary Stream of Providence, yet this we are assur'd of, that every Dispensation, is the Birth of a Wise Model. *The ballancing of the Clouds* is call'd *the wondrous work of him, who is perfect in Knowledge*; *The Winds passing and cleansing them* is brought in as an Argument, that *with God is terrible Majesty*: But yet he concludes, *touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: He is excellent in Power, and in Judgment, and in plenty of Justice; He will not afflict, Job 37. 16. 21, 22, 23. i. e. not without valuable Cause.*

3. See how *dreadful* a thing it is to *displease Him*, who is so well provided of Methods for our Punishment. It's usually the fulness of Earthly Delights, that makes us Secure, and unthought-

thoughtful of God: But we have lately felt what a Dispatch his Anger can Work, when he designs to narrow our Substance, when *he rents it with a stormy Wind in his Fury, Ezek. 13. 13.* That which has been the Gains of long Hazard and Toil may be gone in a Moment. This was Threatned against *Ephraim, that tho' he be fruitful among his Brethren, a Wind of the Lord shall come up from the Wilderness, and his Spring shall become dry, and his Fountain be dried up: He shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant Vessels, Hos. 13. 15.*

If we take a look at Sinners, thro' this Text, we may see how Stupid they are to engage such a Power against them: We have lately known the truth of that Threatning, as if it had been Design'd for our Days: *The Rich Man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered; he openeth his eyes, and he is not: Terrors take hold on him as Waters, a Tempest steals him away in the Night, Job 27. 19, 20.* And does not this let us see the Folly of a Quarrel with God? We may pamper a vain Mind with one idle Imagination after another, but

this only prepares us for a more dismal Surprize of Ruin. There's scarce any thing, that Sinners Design, with more Pleasure and Arrogance, than the Destruction of the Godly : they would raze out all the Prints of Seriousness from this World : And every Struggle in this Project is attended with as much Assurance, as Nature can either give or take : but their Eyes are too low fixt ; they only look at the Persons, whom this Malice is directed against. They do not Consider, what a Powerful Alliance Believers are brought into : So, that when they push on their Methods of Iniquity, its only to receive a Baffle from Omnipotence : Thus the Promise runs to God's People ; *Thou shalt fan them, and the Wind shall carry them away, and the Whirlwind shall scatter them ; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the holy one of Israel, Isa. 41. 16.*

4. See, to whom you must direct your selves for the blessing of the Winds. Many of this Auditory do more especially know how Servicable they are to the greatest Concerns of Life : And
you

you here learn, who has the Disposal of them. They are sometimes the chief Instruments of your Prosperity, and when their Commission is alter'd, they can as easily destroy your fulness as promote it. Now as God must be acknowledg'd in all your Ways, so it's highly becoming your Profession to be often upon your Knees, to maintain a Correspondence with Him, who is *the Great Ensurer*. He alone can breath a Blessing upon your Attempts. The Gales, that must carry you on in every Voyage, are laid up in the hollow of His Hand, let it be your Work to fetch them out by Prayer. You may also see, who it is that has blest and secur'd you; He has been *your Refuge from the Storm*, Isa. 25. 4.

[2.] We are to make such an Improvement of this, as more especially suits with our design
THIS DAY.

We are come to humble our Selves
before the Lord, for a late dreadful
Blow

Blow, that he has given to these Parts of the World. We may apply the Prophets Words to our Case. *The Firr Trees have been terribly shaken; the Gates of the Rivers open'd, and the Palace dissolved, Nah. 2. 3, 6.* We have first, *the Call of Heaven* to the present Duty; every Blast sounds the Exhortation: And this is Echo'd to, from *our Earthly Powers*, who both confess the Obligation, and enforce it. By giving our presence here, we Answer the Commands of Civil Authority; but there's something more requir'd, if we would come up to God's Expectations. A bare attendance upon Him in Worshipping Crouds is not enough. He complains of a People, that were very exact in observing Times of Humiliation, but they did not look far enough. *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth, and eleventh Month, did ye fast unto me, even unto me? Zach. 7. 5.* Now He seems to demand the following Duties of us.

1. Let us humbly *submit to His Work*. It becomes us not to reply
and

and clamour at Providence, but to look upwards with a silent devoutness, and consider, *Who has done it*: One who never stood at the Creatures Bar; Who gives no Account of His Matters, Job 33. 13. Whose Dispensations are liable to no Arrest, and patient of no Censure. Methinks, there is a particular Appearance of God in a Wind, more than in many other publick Calamities. Consumptions by Fire should lead us to Him, but these are brought on by Instruments. General Distempers tell us of His hand, but here also He makes use of second Causes: But a Tempest is a work that we can have no share in, and this calls for Submission. *David chooseth to have an Affliction of God's bestowing, Let me fall into the Hands of the Lord.* Tho' He was more capable of acting with a ruinous Dispatch than Enemies could do, yet *there is Mercy with Him*, 2 Sam. 24. 14. When Job understood that his Children were swept off immediately by the Hand of Provi-

Providence, he submits with a Religious Patience. The Messenger told him, *There came a great Wind from the Wilderness, and smote the four Corners of the House, and it fell upon the Young Men, and they are dead. Then Job arose, and fell upon the Ground, and worshipped, and said, the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord, Job* I, 19, 20.

2. Let us look narrowly into our Selves. In a time of publick Judgment every one is to know the Plague of his own Heart. How many of us may say with *Jonah, I know that for my sake this great Tempest is come upon you?* Jon. I. 12. We have contributed our Part to the common Miseries. We may this Day denounce a *Wo to the Crown of Pride, and the Drunkards of Ephraim, when the Lord with a destroying Storm is casting down to the Earth, Isa. 28. 1, 2.* Tho' perhaps we do not run to the same excess of Riot, with a great many. Debauchery

chery, Lewdness and Swearing may be Crimes above our Size. But are we not chargeable with Abominations of another sort? Our Contempt of the Divine Ordinances, the Ravage that we make of Christian Love, the Sloth and Dulness of our Zeal for God, these are Things that have their cry for Vengeance. But if we are harden'd against a Cure, and resolv'd, that these Follies shall be our inseparable Darlings, a more extensive and overflowing Scourge may be prepar'd for us. There's nothing but fury and black Dismay, for a People that *hate to be Reformed*. Thus God complains, *Can an Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spot, then may ye also do good, who are accusom'd to do evil. Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the Wind of the Wilderness. This is thy Lot, the Portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord, because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood, Jer. 13. 23, 24, 25.* Sometimes the very Face of a Judgment tells us
that

that the World is deeply charg'd with Guilt: And of this sort was our late Storm. *The Earth is utterly broken down, clean dissolved, and moved exceedingly: The Earth reels to and fro like a Drunkard, and is removed like a Cottage, for the Transgression thereof is heavy upon it, Isa. 24. 19, 20.*

3. Let this put us upon a speedy Reformation. This the Psalmist begs, *Persecute them with thy Tempest, and make them afraid with thy Storm; fill their Faces with shame, that they may seek thy Name, O Lord, Psalm 83. 15, 16.* If any of you are stain'd with scandalous Crimes, take your last farewell of 'em; from this moment hold them at a Distance. Do not dare to go on sinking the Nation still lower in Guilt and Unhappiness. Now that God has brought upon us (as he calls it by the Prophet) *A dry Wind of the high Places in the Wilderness, not to fan nor to cleanse, but a full Wind;* His cry to us is the same with that to Jerusalem; *O wash thine*

over the *VV*inds, &c. 31

*thine Heart from wickedness that thou
mayest be saved, How long shall vain
Tho'ts lodge within thee! Jer. 4. 11,
14.* And as for others, who think
this is a charge that flies over them,
let them examine what is amiss, and
begin an universal Amendment.

There's one thing that I would
more especially recommend to you,
as *the Lesson of this Providence*, and
that is, a Zeal for the REFOR-
MATION of MANNERS.
That good Work goes heavily on,
thro' the Cowardice and Baseness of
some that pretend to wish well to't.
It's a *National Stroke* that we are now
Lamenting, and I know no greater
piece of *National Service*, that we
are capable of. Our Fleet is the ve-
ry Picture of Hell. They scarce
breath any thing but Blasphemy a-
gainst God. We have dreadful tastes
of their Vileness ashore: You neg-
lect the due Methods, that should be
made use of to reclaim them, and
therefore God has taken the Work
into

into his own Hands: *Such as you would not rebuke, he has drown'd.* Let this warn us not to be so careless and remiss in a Service of general Importance. Labour to prevent such another Stroke. When the whole Nation of *Israel* was infatuated with the Spirit of Idolatry, God tells his Mind to *Elijah* in such a Chain of Terrors, as perhaps was the Model of his future Dealings with that People. *The Lord passed by, and behold, a great and strong Wind rent the Mountains, and brake in pieces the Rocks, and after the WIND an EARTH-QUAKE?* 1 Kings 19. 11. Let us endeavour to break this Succession of Judgments.

4. Let us be earnest with Him for Mercy, and Pardon. O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scatter'd us, thou hast been displeas'd; O turn thy self to us again: Thou hast made the Earth to tremble; thou hast broken it, heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh, Psalm 60. 1, 2. That there are notorious

rious Abominations among us, is a thing that will sooner bear a Complaint than a Denial. That God has declar'd His Resentment with a peculiar Thunder, is also plain: Is it not therefore our necessary Duty to beg off His Wrath, and solicit the return of that Favour, which has been interrupted? And, for your Encouragement, consider that sometimes a publick Judgment goes before the most valuable Mercies. God tells the *Jews*, *I will shake the Heavens, the Earth, the Sea, and all Nations, and then the desire of all Nations shall come*, Hag. 2. 6, 7. And Christ gives a Promise of the same kind to his Disciples: *There shall be signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the Earth distress of Nations, with perplexity, the Sea and the Waves roaring: Men's Hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things, which are coming on the Earth; for the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken. But when these Things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your*
D Heads,

Heads, for your Redemption draweth nigh, Luke 21. 25, 26, 28.

[3.] I shall conclude with an Address of Peace to Gods own People, in Two Particulars,

1. *How great is your Friend? How able to deliver and protect you? This David remembers with Adoration, In my Distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: The Earth shook and trembled; He rode upon a Cherub and did flie, He was seen upon the Wings of the Wind, Psalm 18. 6, 7, 10. When the Prophet tells us that God brings the Wind out of his Treasuries, he calls Him, the Portion of Jacob, and Israel the Rod of His Inheritance, Jer. 10. 13, 16. You're now tossing in a restless tempestuous World; The Floods of ungodly Men make you afraid: But raise an Eye to the Almightyness, that has undertaken your Welfare. For tho' the Floods have lifted up their Waves; yet the Lord on high is mightier than the noise of*

of many Waters, or the Waves of the Sea, Psalm 93. 3, 4. With how much cruel pomp and thirst did Pharaoh pursue the trembling Flock of Israel? There was nothing to disoblige his Malice, and stun his Confidence, till God blew with His Wind, and cover'd him; He sunk as lead in the mighty Waters, Exod. 15. 10.

2. How Happy a Thing is it to be interested in a Covenant? Because,

(1.) That either gives you a *Protection* from these Calamities, or a *Blessing* with them. Christ is call'd an *Hiding-place from the Wind, and a Covert from the Tempest, Isa. 32. 2.* Sometimes God steps in visibly between His People and Danger; according to that Promise, *A Thousand shall fall at thy Right-Hand, and Ten Thousand at thy Left, but the Evil shall not come nigh thee, Psalm 91. 7.* Or, if you do take a share in the common Distress, yet you're not equal Sufferers with others: They get no good

by it, but it's a means of spiritual Advantage to you. So that you need not be afraid of evil Tydings; your Hearts are fixed, trusting in the Lord, Psalm 112. 7.

(2.) You have other Blessings, that are not liable to these Hazards. The Lord will create upon every Dwelling-place of Mount Sion, and upon all her Assemblies, a Cloud and Smoke by Day, and the shining of a flaming Fire by Night; for upon all the Glory shall be a Defence: And there shall be a Tabernacle for a Shadow in the Day-time, and for a Place of Refuge, and for a Covert from Storm, and from Rain, Isa. 4. 5, 6. No Wind can blow away your Inheritance. Christ has compar'd you to an House built upon a Rock, which fell not, tho' the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon it, Matth. 7. 24, 25. It's said of the upright Soul, that he shall dwell on high; his Place of Defence shall be the Menitions of Rocks; Bread shall be

be given to him, and his Waters shall be Sure, Isa. 33. 16. You hear that God has the Disposal of Storms, but He has a nearer hold of your Portion. The Winds are gather'd into His Fists, but your Happiness is in His Heart. The Lord shall roar out of Sion, and utter His Voice from Jerusalem, and the Heaven and the Earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the Hope of His People, and the Strength of the Children of Israel, Joel 3. 16.

(3.) You are going to a Place where there shall be no more of these Frights and Confusions. The Apostle tells us, there must be a removing of those things which may be shaken, as of things that are made; that those things which CANNOT BE SHAKEN may remain. We have received a Kingdom which cannot be moved, Heb. 12. 27, 28. You're born for a State of Eternal Calmness. The Ruffle and Distraction that this World is liable to, have no Place
in

in those glorious Regions, where your Saviour lives. Therefore look within the Vail, where there is nothing else but Sedate Purity, and satisfying Enjoyment. I will shut up all with the Psalmist's Words, giving them a little Variation, *Thou breakest the Ships of Tarshish with a strong Wind, but this we have heard, and this we shall see, in the City of our God, that God will establish it for ever, Psalm 48. 7, 8.*

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